

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 IO-04 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-05

JUSE-00 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-04 TRSE-00 USIA-06

NSC-05 OES-02 OMB-01 SS-15 DODE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7967

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

US MISSION GENEVA 453

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 17205

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR, TH

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL DIRECTIVE ON NARCOTICS CONTROL ACTIVITIES

REF: STATE 233134

1. I WELCOME THE PERSONAL INTEREST WHICH THE PRESIDENT HAS SHOWN IN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL BY HIS DESIGNATION OF OCTOBER 20-26 AS NATIONAL DRUG ABUSE PREVENTION WEEK AND BY HIS ENCOURAGEMENT OF OUR DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS ABROAD IN THE TASK OF PERSUADING OUR FRIENDS AND ALLIES TO COOPERATE WITH US IN DEVELOPING MORE EFFECTIVE ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAMS.

2. ALTHOUGH ONLY A SMALL PERCENTAGE (ACCORDING TO SOME ESTIMATES ABOUT 15 PERCENT) OF OPIUM DERIVATIVES CONSUMED IN THE US ORIGINATES IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE, WE ARE DETERMINED HERE TO REDUCE THIS PERCENTAGE EVEN FURTHER. IN THIS EFFORT,
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WE ARE PLEASED TO REPORT THAT WE HAVE RECEIVED UNDERSTANDING

AND SUPPORT FROM THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT AND ITS CENTRAL NARCOTICS BOARD. SUBSTANTIAL ELEMENTS, BOTH WITHIN THE THAI GOVERNMENT AND IN PRIVATE CIRCLES, ARE CONVINCED THAT DRUG ABUSE HAS APPROACHED DANGEROUS PROPORTIONS IN THAI URBAN CENTERS AND, THEREFORE, UNDERSTAND THAT CONTROL MEASURES ARE AS MUCH IN THAI NATIONAL INTEREST AS IN THE INTEREST OF OTHER NATIONS.

3. THE STATUS OF THE PROGRAM IN THAILAND IS DESCRIBED IN OUR MOST RECENT MISSION QUARTERLY REPORT (EMBTel 16999, OCTOBER 22, 1974) COVERING JULY TO SEPTEMBER. WE HAVE BEEN GRATIFIED BY THE SEIZURE ON OCTOBER 17 OF ONE TON OF OPIUM AND ABOUT 51 KILOS OF HEROIN AND HEROIN BASE BY BORDER PATROL POLICE FROM A CARAVAN ORIGINATING IN BURMA. WE WISH TO STRESS IN THIS REGARD THAT THIS SEIZURE WAS ACCOMPLISHED BY THE THAI ALONE, ACTING ON THEIR OWN INTELLIGENCE AND WITHOUT SUPPORT -- OR PRODDING -- REQUIRED FROM US.

4. A LONG ROAD LIES AHEAD BEFORE THE COMBINED EFFORTS OF THE CONCERNED NATIONS IN THIS REGION CAN REDUCE SUBSTANTIALLY THE FLOW OF NARCOTICS INTO INTERNATIONAL MARKETS. WE FULLY SUPPORT THE DESIRE FOR "MORE IMAGINATIVE AND EFFECTIVE CONDUCT OF THE PROGRAM", AND WE WISH TO SUGGEST THAT OUR CHIEF GOAL SHOULD BE TO HAVE A SOUND ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM COMPLEMENTED BY A PRACTICAL DEVELOPMENT AND CROP SUBSTITUTION EFFORT AND, ABOVE ALL, TO MAINTAIN A STEADY LEVEL OF PRESSURE ACROSS THE WHOLE FRONT OF NARCOTICS CONTROL. IT IS CLEAR THAT, WHILE OUR THAI ALLIES ARE WILLING TO WORK WITH US AND CONCERNED ON THEIR OWN ACCOUNT, THEY SUSPECT THAT ONE OF THESE DAYS AMERICAN INTEREST IN NARCOTICS CONTROL WILL FADE. THEREFORE, OUR PROGRAM HERE IS DESIGNED TO DEVELOP A STRONG AND SELF-PERPETUATING INDIGENOUS INTEREST IN REMOVING FROM THAILAND ITS INTERNATIONAL STIGMA AS THE CONDUIT THROUGH WHICH A SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF THE 700 TONS OF OPIUM AND OPIUM DERIVATIVES PRODUCED IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE ENTER WORLD MARKETS. THEN, SHOULD OUR ABILITY TO HELP THE RTG IN THIS AREA BE REDUCED, THAILAND WILL NONETHELESS MAINTAIN AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM.

5. AN "EFFECTIVE PROGRAM" IN THAILAND MEANS ABOVE ALL THE WILLING COOPERATION OF THAI OFFICIALDOM AT ALL LEVELS AND OUT
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INTO THE FURTHEST BORDER VILLAGE. TO DATE, WE HAVE COME NOWHERE NEAR TO MEETING THIS REQUIREMENT. THE NUMBER OF THAI OFFICIALS DEDICATED TO EFFECTIVE NARCOTICS CONTROL REMAINS SMALL, LIMITED TO THE TALENT ASSEMBLED AT THE CENTRAL NARCOTICS BOARD, THE 50-PLUS EFFECTIVES OF THE SPECIAL NARCOTICS ORGANIZATION AND THE TOUGH ELITE OF THE BORDER PATROL POLICE ASSIGNED TO NARCOTICS WORK, PERHAPS 100 IN ALL. ARRAYED AGAINST THIS MODEST FORCE IS A COMPLEX SYSTEM OF OPIUM PRODUCTION, REFINING AND

TRANSPORT WITH ORIGINS IN THE LAST CENTURY COVERING THOUSANDS OF SQUARE MILES OF REMOTE BORDER TERRITORY OF BURMA, LAOS AND THAILAND WHERE NO EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT CONTROL EXISTS, AND PROVIDING LIVELIHOOD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FOR TENS OF THOUSANDS OF THAI, BURMESE, LAO, SHAN, KAREN, KACHIN AND CHINESE. IN ORDER TO BROADEN THE SCOPE OF THE BATTLE AGAINST NARCOTICS, WE WILL BE ATTEMPTING IN THE COMING WEEKS TO PERSUADE -- INDIRECTLY -- THAI POLITICAL PARTIES TO INCLUDE AN ANTI-TRAFFICKING PLAN IN THEIR PLATFORMS. IF SUCCESSFUL, THIS MIGHT HAVE THE EFFECT OF MOBILIZING MORE WEIGHT OF PUBLIC OPINION BEHIND THE PROGRAMS AND EVEN BRING A GREATER SENSE OF URGENCY INTO PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION. IN THE LONG RUN, THE BEST MEANS WE HAVE TO KEEP THE PRESSURE ON ARE TO HAVE THE BEST INTELLIGENCE POSSIBLE, TO HELP TO PROVIDE THE WHEREWITHAL (HELICOPTERS, MODERN ARMS) TO THE MEN WHO MUST SEIZE THE CARAVANS, PATIENTLY TO CONVEY TO THE THAI OUR OWN SPECIAL EXPERTISE IN ENFORCEMENT, AND TO DRAW UP SENSIBLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS COMPLEMENTARY TO THE EXCELLENT WORK DONE BY THE UN PROJECT FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL ON CROP SUBSTITUTION AND EXTENSION. (THE DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM WE ARE ADVOCATING ARE CONTAINED IN FY 76 NARCOTICS PROGRAM SUBMISSION BKK A-248 DATED SEPTEMBER 13, 1974).

CONCLUSION:

6. IT TOOK OVER 100 YEARS TO DEVELOP THE NARCOTICS SYSTEM NOW ESTABLISHED IN THE GOLDEN TRIANGLE. IT WILL TAKE A GENERATION TO UPROOT IT AND REPLACE IT WITH AN ALTERNATE WAY OF LIFE FOR THE PEOPLE CONCERNED. WE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DESIGN OF WISE PROGRAMS WHICH WILL IN TIME RESULT IN THE VIRTUAL DISAPPEARANCE OF OPIUM CULTIVATION FROM THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD. TO ACHIEVE THIS END, THE SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT SHOWN BY THE PRESIDENT AND CONGRESS WILL BE AN EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN ENCOURAGING THE THAI TO KEEP UP MAXIMUM

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PRESSURE ON ALL FRONTS: TREATMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND ENFORCEMENT.
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